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Qualifying Note: The Burial Assistance Program is a separate FIA program that is administered by Family Investment case managers. Program information, including basic eligibility requirements, is provided here.

REQUIREMENTS

- A. Burial assistance pays for the funeral expenses of a deceased person without other means of payment who, at the time of death, is:
1. A foster child under the Social Services Administration
 2. A TCA customer , even if the grant was suspended
 3. A customer of Supplemental Security Income (SSI), including a nursing home resident receiving Medical Assistance who prior to admittance received SSI
 4. A newborn child who is not part of the assistance unit if:
 - The child's mother receives TCA, and
 - The child died not more than 60 days after its date of birth or the date of the mother's release from the hospital in which the birth occurred, whichever is later
 5. An individual considered eligible for Transitional Emergency Medical and Housing Assistance (TEMHA) even though he/she has not actually received assistance
- B. Total funeral expenses cannot exceed \$1,500 and the grant cannot exceed \$650, except under the following circumstances:
1. Exclude the cost of a burial plot, vault, grave digging, or burial clothing contributed by family or friends from the total funeral expenses
 2. The local department may establish an amount higher than \$650 if it is:
 - Met by local funds, and
 - In the local plan and approved by the Family Investment Administration

Note: If the conditions of A and B are not met, deny burial assistance.

Note: The grant can include preparation and transportation of the bodies of deceased migrant workers to their place of origin.

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- C. The maximum grant of \$650 cannot be used to reimburse the applicant or vendor for paid funeral expenses

VERIFICATION

Applicants must provide proof of:

1. Available resources
2. Death
3. Funeral arrangements

ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATION

- A. Determine the available resources, those easily convertible to cash, of the deceased and of each individual legally responsible for the support of the deceased
- B. Resources include the following items:
1. Money in the bank
 2. Stocks
 3. Bonds
 4. Cash value of life insurance
 5. Death benefits
 6. Real property other than the applicant's home

Note: Remember, the cost of a burial plot, vault, grave digging, or burial clothing, when provided by friends or family, is not considered a resource or part of the total funeral expense.

PAYMENT

- A. The funeral services vendor gives the applicant at least 3 funeral arrangement choices which include the following:
1. Maximum \$650

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2. Maximum \$1,500
 3. At least one choice for an amount between 1 and 2 above
- B. After the applicant selects the service determine the total funeral cost
1. Subtract available resources from \$1,500 or the total funeral expenses, if less

EXAMPLE

\$1,500	Total funeral expenses
<u>- 900</u>	Available resources
\$ 600	Amount due

2. Compare the result with \$650
 3. If local policy allows a higher maximum grant than \$650, use that amount to determine the maximum payment
 4. Record the facts and the decision on the form specified by the local department
 - Keep the original accessible for centralized control, audit, and review
 - File one copy in the case record
- C. Pay the funeral service vendor chosen by the applicant the lower amount of \$650 or the actual expenses
1. Send payment within 14 days of receiving a completed purchase authorization and invoice including an itemized statement of services provided from the vendor
 2. The case manager should tell the vendor, if payment is not received within 14 days. The vendor should call the department to find out when the check was mailed
- D. Replace lost, stolen, or never received checks within 5 working days of when the vendor:
1. Notifies the local department, if it is within 30 calendar days of the date on which the check was issued
 2. Files a complaint with the local police and furnishes a valid complaint number, if the check was stolen
 3. Signs a completed forgery affidavit, if the check was cashed

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CASE MANAGEMENT TIPS:

The local department and funeral services vendors should inform applicants that burial assistance is available

EXAMPLES

1. Ms. Franklin, who received SSI, was placed in a nursing home on August 8 when her daughter, Betsy Ross, could no longer care for her at home. Medical Assistance paid for Ms. Franklin's stay in the home until she died on March 5. Ms. Franklin, at the time of death, had accumulated \$900 in her bank account. The funeral service vendor was willing to do the funeral, excluding burial clothing, plot, vault, and/or grave digging, for \$1,000.

\$1,000	Total funeral expenses
<u>- 900</u>	Available resources
\$ 100	Burial Assistance payment

The payment is \$100 because it is less than the maximum of \$650

2. Mr. Hamilton, who was receiving TCA for himself, his wife, and son, died suddenly. The family has \$50 in the bank from his last paycheck. Mr. Hamilton's insurance through his employer provides \$300 toward funeral expenses and the life insurance is \$500. He already has a burial plot within the family vault and his brothers and sisters are pooling their money to provide the cost of burial clothing and grave digging. After deducting the cost of a plot, burial clothing, and grave digging from the expenses, the chosen funeral home still is willing to accept \$1,500.

\$1,500	Total funeral expenses
<u>- 850</u>	Available resources (cash, burial fund, life insurance)
\$ 650	The maximum allowable payment is made

3. Ms. Burr receives TCA for herself and her child. She gave birth to a second child on July 15. The child died July 20. Ms. Burr, who is in a training program, has no other available resources. The chosen funeral home will bury the child for \$650.

\$650 - The maximum Burial Assistance grant is made

4. Ms. Paine had begun chemotherapy and could not work. She applied for Transitional Emergency Medical and Housing Assistance (TEMHA) and was

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found to be eligible. However, she passed away before any benefit was paid. Her sister applied for burial assistance. The chosen funeral home would not charge less than \$2,000, even excluding burial plot, vault, burial clothing, and grave digging.

Burial Assistance is **denied** because the total funeral expense exceeded \$1,500

The local department explains the denial and suggests that Ms. Paine's sister find a vendor who is willing to accept \$1,500 or less

5. Social Services placed Patrick Henry in Ms. Hancock's home as a foster child two years ago when his mother was incarcerated. Patrick died from injuries received in an accident. He had a bank account containing \$1,000 he had earned. Ms. Hancock found a funeral home willing to provide all funeral services for \$1,500.

\$1,500	Total funeral expenses
<u>-1,000</u>	Available resources
\$ 500	Burial Assistance Payment

The payment is \$500 because it is less than the maximum of \$650

6. Ms Hancock received TCA for herself and one child until the grant was closed for non-cooperation with work requirements. She had notified the local office that she was now willing to cooperate and had scheduled a job interview. On the way to the interview she was in an accident and died from her injuries. Ms. Hancock had no available resources. Her mother applied for burial assistance and found a funeral home willing to provide funeral services for \$1,000 after deducting the cost of burial plot, vault, burial clothing, and grave digging. According to their FIA approved plan, the local department will pay up to \$500 more than the \$650 maximum, funding permitting. Funds were available at the time of the request.

\$ 650	Burial Assistance maximum
<u>+ 350</u>	Local funds contribution
\$ 1,000	Total funeral expenses

The payment is the full \$1,000 (\$650 + \$350)